

Senate Resolution 903

By: Senators Hill of the 32nd, Moody of the 56th, Hill of the 4th, Thomas of the 2nd, Johnson of the 1st and others

A RESOLUTION

1 Expressing cultural, economic, and educational cooperation with the Republic of Austria;
2 and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, there is a bond of friendship between the citizens of Georgia and Austria and
4 Georgia welcomes all opportunities to grow our already deep relationship at all levels
5 including cultural, academic, business, and all others; and

6 WHEREAS, Georgia is proud to serve as home to the Honorary Consulate General of the
7 Republic of Austria; and

8 WHEREAS, Georgia is proud to serve as home to the Austrian Trade Commission; and

9 WHEREAS, Georgia is proud to be the home of over 18 Austrian companies, employing
10 many of our Georgia citizens; and

11 WHEREAS, the cities of Atlanta, Georgia, and Salzburg, Austria, are official Sister Cities;
12 and

13 WHEREAS, in the early 1730's, about 300 Evangelical Lutherans from the countryside
14 outside Salzburg were welcomed by the new colony of Georgia and were its first religious
15 refugees; and

16 WHEREAS, the first group of about 60 refugees arrived in the one-year old settlement of
17 Savannah on March 12, 1734, after a stormy and difficult voyage from England where they
18 were greeted by General Oglethorpe, who offered them a site about 20 miles down the
19 Savannah River, and the entire town turned out to watch their arrival, and several cannon
20 were fired to salute Georgia's newest colonists; and

1 WHEREAS, General Oglethorpe also approved their choice of a name for their new
2 settlement: Ebenezer, a biblical word meaning "stone of help" and Ebenezer became the
3 second town of colonial Georgia; and

4 WHEREAS, the original site of Ebenezer presented serious hardships and many people died
5 and, in 1736, the settlers asked General Oglethorpe to let them move to a less swampy area
6 nearby which they called "New Ebenezer"; and

7 WHEREAS, later other German speaking people, mostly Swiss Germans, Palatines, and
8 Swabians, joined the Salzburgers at Ebenezer and all of these Germanic people became
9 known as "Salzburgers"; and

10 WHEREAS, the Salzburgers established the first Sunday School in Georgia in 1734 and also
11 organized what is recognized as the first public orphanage in America, now named the
12 Treutlen House; and

13 WHEREAS, John Adam Treutlen, who was fleeing an abusive step-father, was one of the
14 first beneficiaries of the orphanage and later became the first elected Governor of the State
15 of Georgia, and the center is now named in his honor; and

16 WHEREAS, a group of descendants of the original settlers have joined together as the
17 Georgia Salzburger Society and operate a small museum near the church and support
18 geneological research; and

19 WHEREAS, each year on Labor Day the group holds a heritage festival which is attended
20 by many people in native Salzburger dress.

21 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body
22 hereby recognize the special friendship between Georgia and Austria and express our
23 appreciation to Honorary Consul General Ferdinand Seefried for his tireless efforts to
24 promote peace and grow business, cultural, and educational ties between our two nations.

25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this body hereby encourages further cultural,
26 educational, and business exchanges between citizens of Georgia and Austria and welcomes
27 all opportunities to develop the special bond of friendship between Georgia and Austria.

- 1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed
- 2 to transmit an appropriate copy of this resolution to Consul Seefried.